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structural Frames

- Concrete frames are typically rigid frames and qualify as noncombustible, fire-resistive construction.
- Noncombustible steel frames may utilize moment connections and require fireproofing to qualify as fire-resistive construction.
- Timber frames require diagonal bracing or shear planes for lateral stability and may qualify as heavy timber construction if used with noncombustible, fire-resistive exterior walls and if the members meet the minimum size requirements specified in the building code.
- Steel and concrete frames are able to span greater distances and carry heavier loads than timber structures.
- Structural frames can support and accept a variety of nonbearing or curtain wall systems.
- The detailing of connections is critical for structural and visual reasons when the frame is left exposed.

Concrete and Masonry Bearing Walls

- Concrete and masonry walls qualify as noncombustible construction and rely on their mass for their load-carrying capability.
- While strong in compression, concrete and masonry require reinforcing to handle tensile stresses.
- Height-to-width ratio, provisions for lateral stability, and proper placement of expansion joints are critical factors in wall design and construction.
- Wall surfaces may be left exposed.

Metal and Wood Stud Walls

- Studs of cold-formed metal or wood are normally spaced
 @ 16" or 24" (406 or 610) o.c.; this spacing is related to the width and length of common sheathing materials.
- Studs carry vertical loads while sheathing or diagonal bracing stiffens the plane of the wall.
- Cavities in the wall frame can accommodate thermal insulation, vapor retarders, and mechanical distribution and outlets of mechanical and electrical services.
- Stud framing can accept a variety of interior and exterior wall finishes; some finishes require a nail-base sheathing.
- The finish materials determine the fire-resistance rating of the wall assembly.
- Stud wall frames may be assembled on site or panelized off site.
- Stud walls are flexible in form due to the workability of relatively small pieces and the various means of fastening available.

